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January 21, 2002

Attorney General John Ashcroft
US Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Mr. Ashcroft:

First of all I want to thank you for your work these past 13 months during an unprecedented time for our country. Please know that in addition to President Bush, you have also been in my prayers. You and the Bush team have brought back a sense of honor and decency to our most important political institution, the presidency. Thank you!!!

I would like to take advantage of this public comment period and give you my thoughts on the Microsoft/DOJ settlement. From the very beginning I was dismayed that a company that has done so many positive things for my organization and me could be interfered with to such a great extent. I have never seen that Microsoft has done any harm to consumers, quite the opposite in fact. I can however vouch for their remarkable contributions to our lives and our economy. If you look at the marketplace numbers, our economy began a serious downfall with the very beginning of this lawsuit.

I run a non-profit organization and through Microsoft's programs for non-profits, we have been able to save a great deal of money and have consequently been able to serve countless more underprivileged citizens in the process. While this settlement is rather detrimental to Microsoft, it is however more than fair and will certainly address the problematic issues alleged in the lawsuit. Microsoft will be giving away a great deal of their source codes, internal interface design and server protocols. They will be giving consumers more choices to use their competitors' products within the Windows operating system and will be making more responsible agreements with OEM's so as to make it more feasible for them to distribute non-Microsoft products.

I sincerely hope that our Justice Department will keep consumer interests in mind when making a decision. This settlement needs to be accepted to ensure that our computer industry will be able to flourish again. Our economy depends on our technology sector; please finalize this settlement for the good of all involved.

Sincerely,


Mark Rourke
Director
Bement Center